

# McNair Scholars Program

NEWSLETTER  
WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY

## THE 2007 SUMMER RESEARCH INTERNSHIP

The **2007 Summer Research Internship** ended this year on June 29 at Stonewall Jackson Resort and Conference Center. Seventeen 2007 Scholars successfully presented their research proposals and two members of the 2006 cohort presented the findings of their research projects at the Eighth Annual WVU McNair Symposium. The presentations were the culmination of daily, intensive four-hour classes in which the Scholars learned research writing and methodologies, enhanced library skills, and attended seminars on preparing for graduate school and the GRE. A few of the Scholars described the summer internship as “eye-opening,” “outstanding,” and “a great program valuable to anyone and everyone.” The McNair program staff would like to thank the summer faculty: Dr. Julie Patrick, Dr. Lisa Weihman, graduate mentors: Christine Lokko, Cyprien Lokko, Maximo Martinez, Katrina McCoy and Anna Stasick as well as the faculty mentors in making the 2007 Summer Research Internship a success.



## SCHOLARS, MENTORS AND RESEARCH TITLES

**Joseph Bailey & Dr. Barbara Rasmussen:** *The Effects of Mountaintop Removal Surface Coal Mining on the Property Values of Proximate Communities in West Virginia*

**David Bello & Dr. Mark Brazaitis:** *Writing My First Novel: Exploring Perceptions of Reality in American Spiritualities and Magical Realism within a Postmodern Theoretical Framework*

**Kimberly Bonilla & Dr. Constance Toffle:** *Implicit Attitudes toward Latinos through Advertising*

**Whitney Burks & Dr. William Fremouw:** *The Co-Morbidity of Symptoms of Anxiety Disorders and Symptoms of Eating Disorders*

**Adam Cagle & Dr. Ralph Hanson:** *Communicating and Organizing the Crisis Management Plans of American Universities*

**Danielle Castillo & Dr. Ruth Kershner:** *Knowledge, Beliefs and Attitudes about Human Papillomavirus, Cervical Cancer, and Gardasil among Women in West Virginia: Will Women be Vaccinated or Vaccinate Their Daughters?*

**Ashley Daniels & Dr. Norman Lass:** *A Comparative Study of the Quality and Intelligibility of the Verbal Output of Augmentative and Alternative Communication Devices*

**Sparkle Davis & Dr. Timothy Heames:** *Women Advancement to the Top: Is It the Organization or the Woman?*

**Chelsea Derlan & Dr. Cheryl McNeil:** *The Impact of Parental Stress, Substance Abuse, Intimate Partner Violence, and Other Potential Risk Factors on Treatment Outcome for Child Maltreatment*

**Sean Dougherty & Dr. Eric Heitzman:** *Changes in Vegetation and Tree Ring Patterns of Old-Growth Red Spruce Forests in West Virginia*

**Victoria Gilliam & Dr. Corrie Mancinelli:** *A Prediction of Factors Contributing to Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome in Long Distance Runners*

**Adrienne Gauna & Dr. David A. Ray:** *Discovering Class I Mobile Elements in the *Chrysomya Macellaria* (Diptera: Calliphoridae) Genome*

**Katasha Leggett & Dr. Rachael Woldoff:** *Black Students' Adjustment to a Predominantly White University: How Residential Background Matters*

**Jason Likens & Dr. Christy Foran:** *Integrative Assessment of Human Mercury Bioaccumulation Due to Coal-fired Power Plants in West Virginia*

**Jesse Potts & Dr. John Ernest:** *Bulls with Balls: Phallic Power in Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises**

**Toby Vernon & Maximo Martinez:** *Paradoxes of Privatization: Assessing Sustainability of Water Reform in Mexico*



# HOT SUMMER EVENTS

The 2007 McNair Scholars summer travel schedule began with a campus visit to the University of Pittsburgh on June 1. Scholars met with staff and graduate students from departments representing their particular disciplines. The U. Pitt visit was followed by a trip to Phipps Conservatory, and a stop at the Cathedral of Learning, and then on to Station Square for dinner before returning to Morgantown. Here is what two Scholars had to say regarding their first McNair trip:

*"This was a wonderful trip. I liked how we got to visit with professors in the department as well as learn more about Pittsburgh and the university as a whole."*

*"It was a great experience. It opened my eyes to all the opportunities available to me."*



Scholars enjoying lunch at the University of Pittsburgh

The afternoon of June 13 saw the McNair group leaving for Washington D.C. The next morning they met with the Dean of Howard University and then enjoyed a campus tour led by HU graduate student guides. That afternoon, the Scholars moved on to the University of Maryland for further meetings. Friday morning began with a visit to American University where the students attended a panel discussion regarding the graduate education process. The scholars were then treated to a tour of Capitol Hill by a representative from the office of Senator Jay Rockefeller. Saturday the group headed for the Congressional Mall where they broke up into smaller groups and toured the city. One contingent, led by Dr. Betty Mei, (who knows good Chinese food when she eats it) took the Metro to Chinatown for a delightful and thoroughly filling afternoon meal. Then it was back to Morgantown for all.

*"The D.C. trip was great. Visiting the schools have been helpful in preparing to visit schools on my own."*

*"I liked to hear from  
been out of my*

*my*

*peers who have not long ago  
position and have made it."*

Katasha Leggett posed with the Alaskan



2007 Scholars visiting American University



Scholars in Chinatown, Washington, D.C.



# UNIVERSITY OF BUFFALO McNAIR CONFERENCE



Eleven Scholars traveled to the 2007 national McNair Scholars Conference in Buffalo, New York in July. Among those attending were 2006 Scholars Lauren Dembeck and Joshua Austin, who presented the findings of their year-long research projects at the convention. For the 2007 Scholars, their very first participation in a national McNair conference taught them valuable lessons.

*"At the conference I learned a lot from several of the keynote speakers, who gave me a better idea of my purpose and goal of obtaining higher education. I learned the real reasons for getting a doctorate, some of which I had never considered before."*

Lauren Dembeck presenting her research at the conference

*"The research conference was informative. It gave me experience attending academic conferences, which will be useful in the future."*

*"Attending the McNair Conference at the University at Buffalo was a valuable experience. I was able to familiarize myself with the McNair family, while at the same time immerse myself in academic conversation...Attending this conference definitely has furthered my determination for pursuing a degree at the doctoral level. The conference, as a whole, was very beneficial for me."*



WVU

McNair Scholars in attendance at the Buffalo Conference



## Alumni News



After receiving her Ed.D. in May, Angie Derk had been busy preparing for her wedding to take place on July 14. Angie wed Dave Grabuloff, her high school sweetheart, in Harrisburg, PA. The couple will reside in Tuntutuliak, Alaska, where Angie will be teaching 6th and 7th graders at the Lewis Angapak Memorial School. Best wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Grabuloff on their adventure in Alaska!



Chris Williamson (2003) received his Master's in Public Policy from American University in May. He will return to WVU to attend Law School in the fall semester. (Left)

Leilani Browning (2005) received her Master's in Applied Gerontology from Ball State University in July. Lani will begin her doctoral studies in Educational Leadership at WVU in the fall semester and will work in the McNair Scholars Office as a graduate assistant. Welcome! (Right)



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***We are proud of our 2007 graduate, Nnenna Minimah, who was selected to participate in a NSF summer research internship at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.***

I thoroughly enjoyed my NIH internship experience at The University of Massachusetts Medical School. Ten weeks of direct research experience in a biomedical setting has opened my eyes to things I never have considered. I worked in the lab of Dr. Oliver Rando who is in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Pharmacology. I was surprised that Dr. Rando chose me to work in his lab this summer since I was not a hard science major but a psychology major, but during the second week I came to understand why. This summer I worked on two projects, one focused on the implication of Lamarckian inheritance in mice and how things other than DNA and its mutations were passed down to their

offspring. The other project focused on humans and my part in the project was to compile a diagnostic questionnaire. The knowledge I have gained this summer is invaluable.

– Nnenna Minimah

